

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** September 24, 2003

**LARSON CALLS ON SPEAKER HASTERT TO TAKE ACTION ON THE ARMED FORCES TAX FAIRNESS ACT**

***Bill To Aid Military Families Has Been Awaiting Consideration for Six Months***

WASHINGTON, D.C.- On March 20, the House unanimously passed the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act, H.R. 1307, which would provide tax relief to members of the military Reserves, National Guard and their families. The Senate quickly amended and passed the same legislation seven days later. However, due to the Senate-added amendments, the House must again take up the legislation. Unfortunately, despite strong bipartisan support for bill in both Houses of Congress, House Speaker Dennis Hastert has allowed it to languish for six months without scheduling a vote on the measure. U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) and three of his Democratic colleagues today called on Speaker Hastert to bring the legislation to the floor for a vote.

Larson joined U.S. Reps. Chet Edwards (TX-11), Marcy Kaptur (OH-09) and Brad Carson (OK-02), in writing the letter to Hastert urging action on the bill.

The letter stated: "H.R. 1307 provides valuable tax relief for our military personnel regarding additional deductions for National Guard and Reserve members, death gratuity benefits paid to families, aid from the Homeowners Assistance Program and dependent care. We believe that any help given to our military families is important in providing some stability for families trying to cope with the loss or separation of loved ones fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan."

The Senate amendments pay the cost of the legislation by taxing expatriates who continue to receive the favorable benefits as American citizens, even after having renounced their own U.S. citizenship.

"How can we look our servicemen and women in the eye and ask them to risk their lives in Iraq, while expatriates are not even asked to give up favorable tax status long after they have turned their backs on America? Surely, tax breaks for those who have renounced their American citizenship to avoid U.S. taxes should not be a higher priority than providing tax benefits to military families and members of the Guard and Reserves. If we pass H.R. 1307 with the Senate amendments, we can quickly send this to the President's desk and bring immediate relief to the military personnel and their families. We urge you to end this unnecessary delay and take immediate action," wrote the lawmakers.

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*For the full text of the letter, please visit: <http://www.house.gov/larson/armedforcestax.pdf>*

*For a summary of the legislation, please visit: <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d108:h.r.01307>:*